DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 386 363 RC 020 260

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TITLE	Stories That Make the World: Oral Literature of the Indian Peoples of the Inland Northwest As Told by Lawrence Aripa, Tom Yellowtail, and Other Elders. The Civilization of the American Indian Series, V. 218.
REPORT NO	ISBN-0-8061-2710-4
PUB DATE	95
NOTE	284p.
AVAILABLE FROM	University of Oklahoma Press, 1005 Asp Ave., Norman, OK 73019-0445 ($24.95).
PUB TYPE	Books (010) -- Creative Works (Literature,Drama,Fine Arts) (030)
EDRS PRICE	Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	*American Indian Culture; *American Indian Literature; *Cultural Context; Elementary Secondary Education; Lesson Plans; Literary Criticism; Literary Devices; *Motifs; Mythology; *Oral Tradition; *Storytelling; Tales
IDENTIFIERS	United States (Northwest)

ABSTRACT

Coeur d'Alene School District (Idaho) developed an American Indian oral literature curriculum component with the help of the neighboring Coeur d'Alene people. This book is based on a general background guide that provides classroom teachers with a context for understanding Coeur d'Alene narratives incorporated into the curriculum. The book also incorporates the oral literature of the Crow people of Montana and other Indian peoples of the Inland Northwest region. It seeks to address questions of authenticity and to foster an appreciation of the stories in a manner the original storytellers intended by placing this oral literature in its cultural, literary, and expressive context. An introduction clarifies terms and concepts concerned with oral literature, myths, and tales; discusses the book's format, which attempts to convey oral nuances and speech patterns in printed text; and presents two principal storytellers, Lawrence Aripa and Tom Yellowtail. Three main sections follow the path to cultural understanding recommended by the storytellers and include texts of 23 stories. "See from the Inside Looking Out" examines motifs and cultural themes that give meaning to the world. "Feel It" discusses the texture conveyed through storytelling, differences between orality and literacy, techniques of storytelling, and the power and creative force of words (literally, the power to make the world). "You've Gotta Go Inside" describes the context of storytelling, including the time for stories and purposes of oral literature. Appendices discuss text interpretation and present a generalized lesson plan adaptable to grades K-12. Contains 126 references, a glossary, an index, and photographs. (SV)

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